

# STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 135

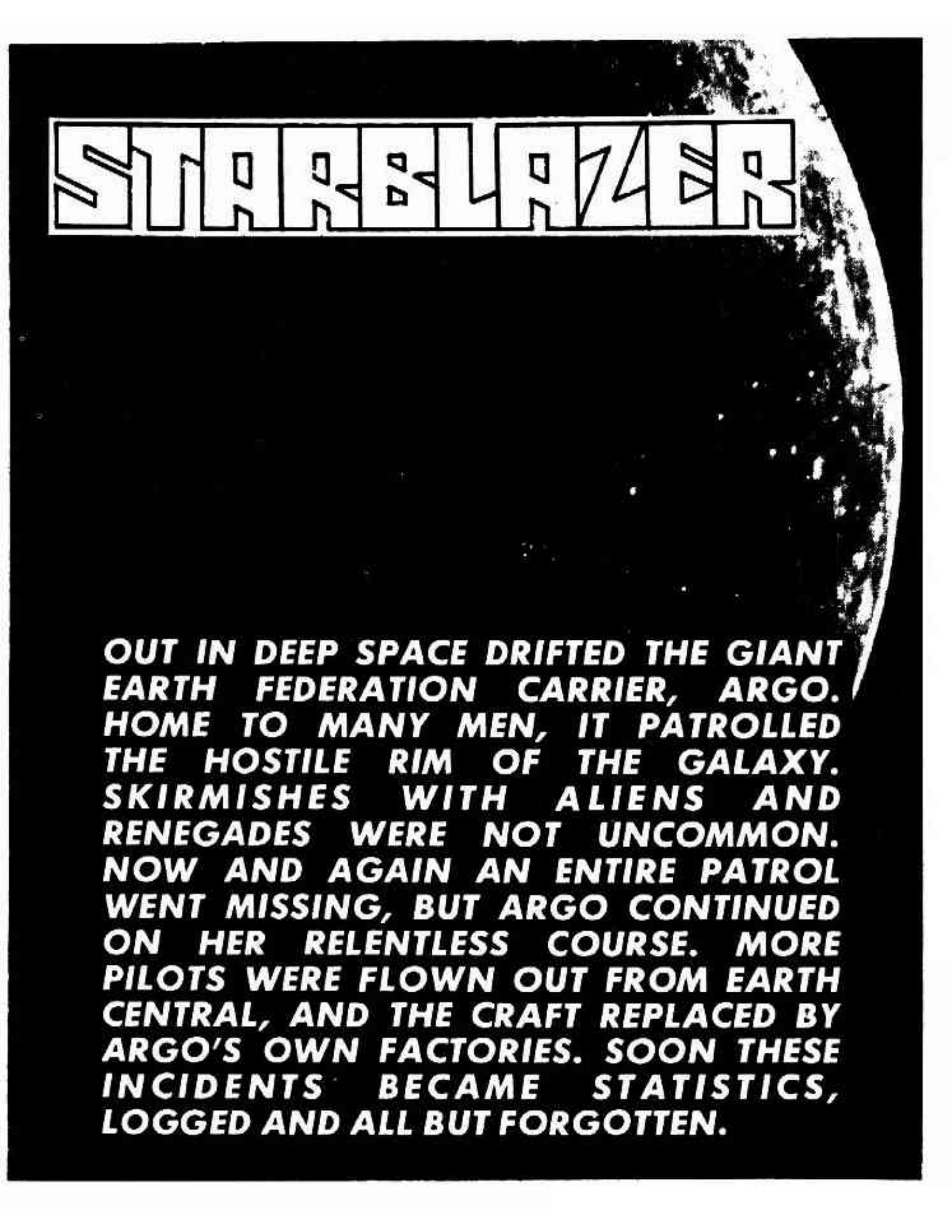
22p



DEEP IN ALIEN SPACE,  
EARTH FLEET CARRIER  
ARGO ENCOUNTERS AN  
ENEMY THAT WAS ONCE  
A FRIEND . . .

## THE LOST PATROL

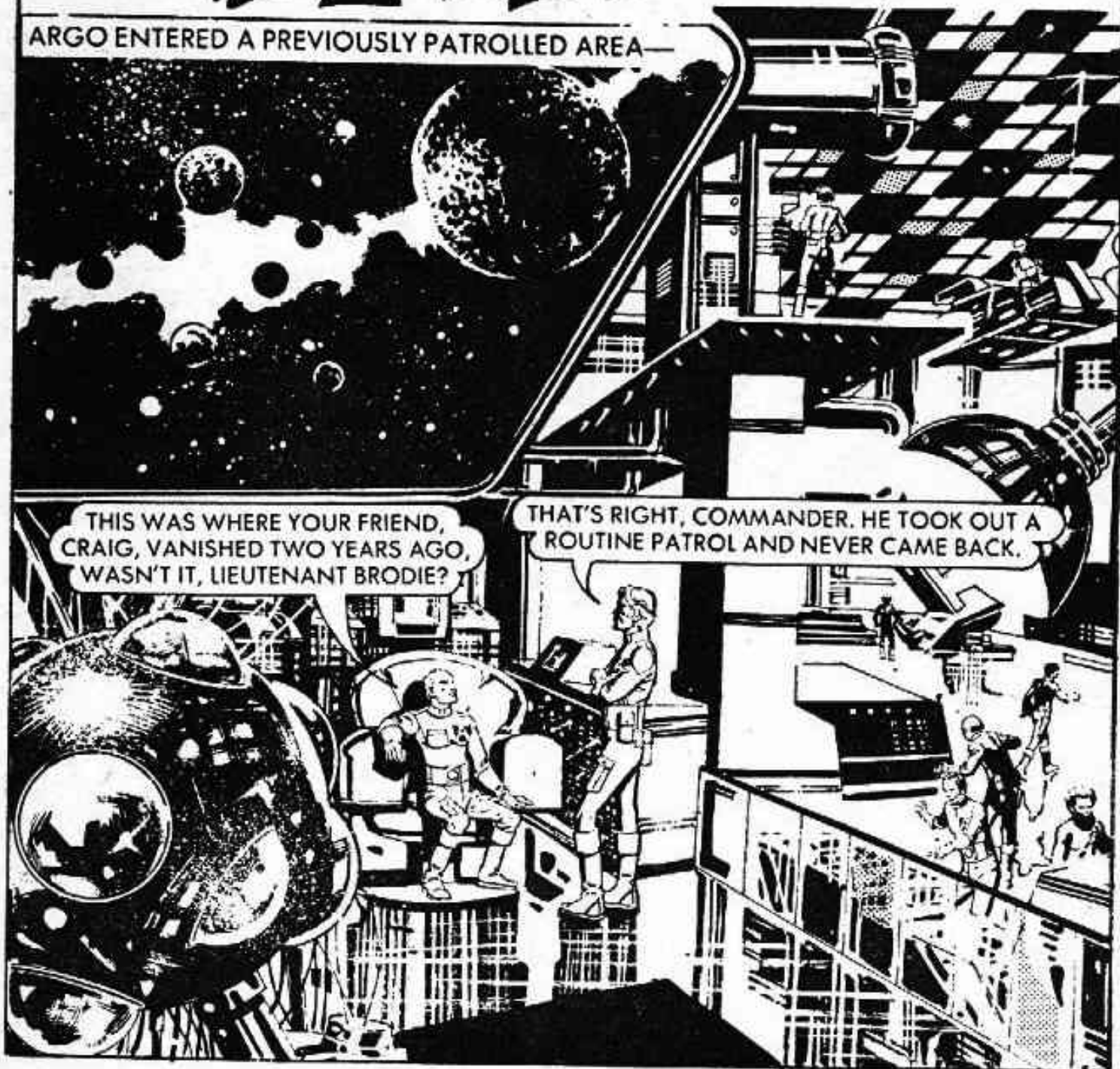
# STARBLAZER



**OUT IN DEEP SPACE DRIFTED THE GIANT EARTH FEDERATION CARRIER, ARGO. HOME TO MANY MEN, IT PATROLLED THE HOSTILE RIM OF THE GALAXY. SKIRMISHES WITH ALIENS AND RENEGADES WERE NOT UNCOMMON. NOW AND AGAIN AN ENTIRE PATROL WENT MISSING, BUT ARGO CONTINUED ON HER RELENTLESS COURSE. MORE PILOTS WERE FLOWN OUT FROM EARTH CENTRAL, AND THE CRAFT REPLACED BY ARGO'S OWN FACTORIES. SOON THESE INCIDENTS BECAME STATISTICS, LOGGED AND ALL BUT FORGOTTEN.**

# THE LOST PATROL

ARGO ENTERED A PREVIOUSLY PATROLLED AREA—



THIS WAS WHERE YOUR FRIEND, CRAIG, VANISHED TWO YEARS AGO, WASN'T IT, LIEUTENANT BRODIE?

THAT'S RIGHT, COMMANDER. HE TOOK OUT A ROUTINE PATROL AND NEVER CAME BACK.

SUDDENLY AN ALARM SOUNDED—

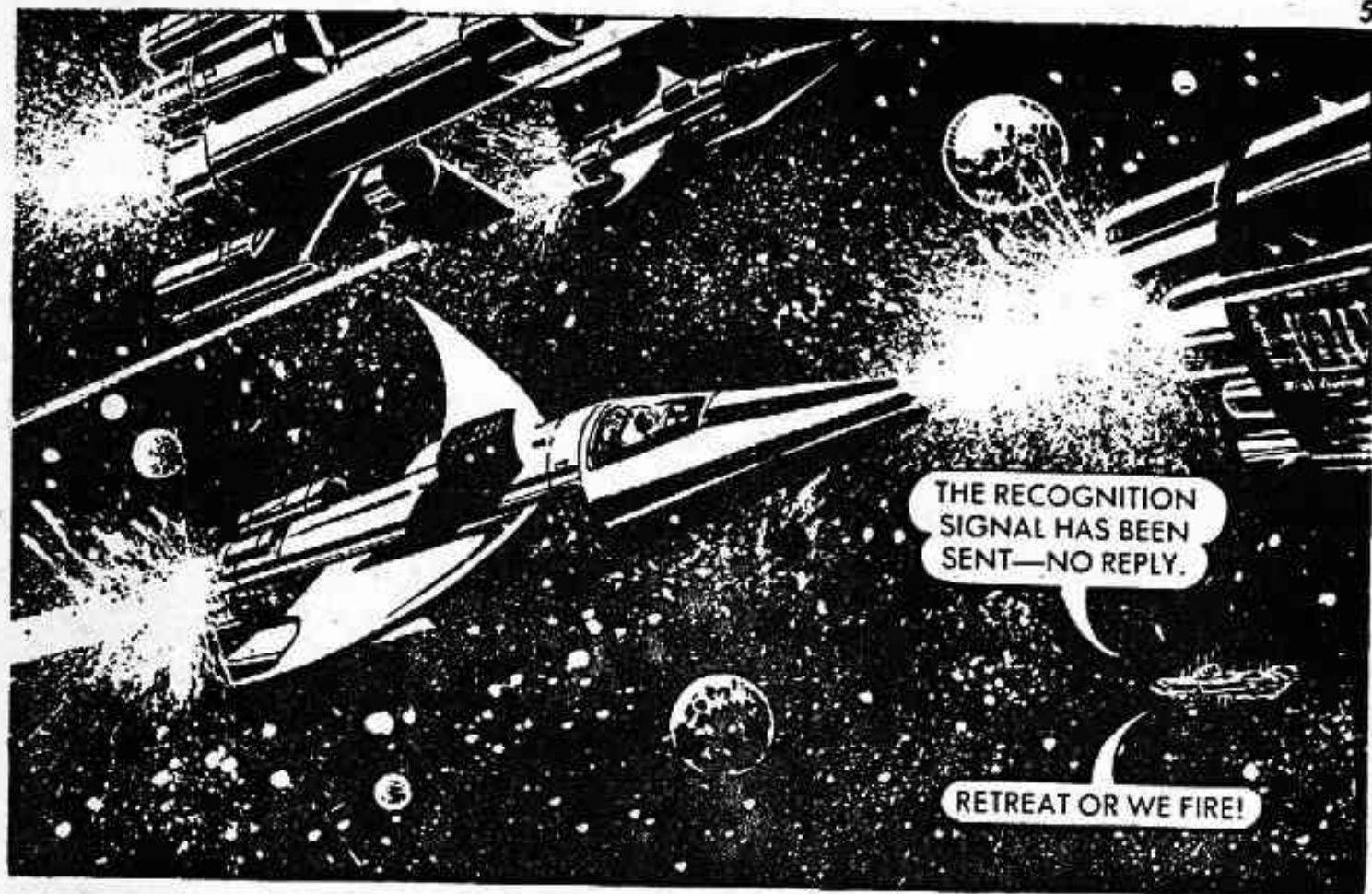
COMMANDER SINCLAIR HERE—  
FIGHTERS SCRAMBLE.



ARGO BECAME A HIVE OF ACTIVITY—

UNIDENTIFIED CRAFT, SIR! HOMING  
IN ON US FAST! TRANSMIT IDENTITY  
CHALLENGE.





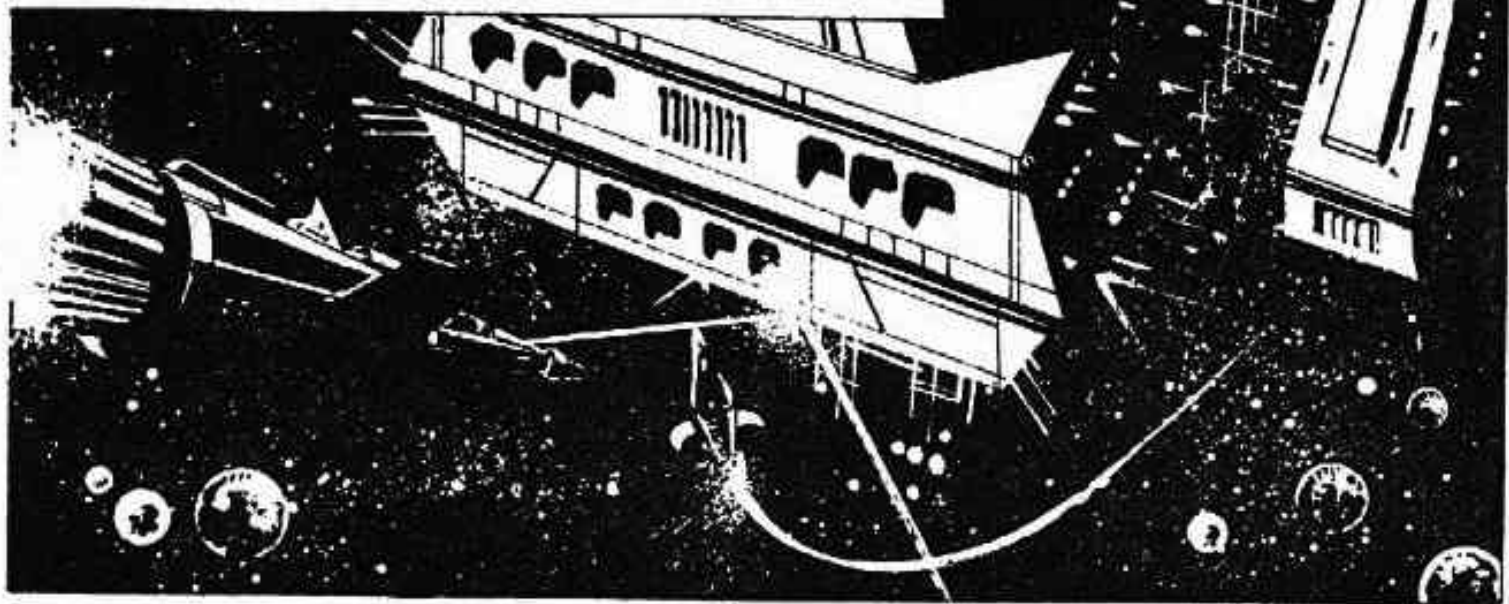
BUT THE CRAFT DID NOT RETREAT, AND ARGO CAME UNDER HEAVY ATTACK—



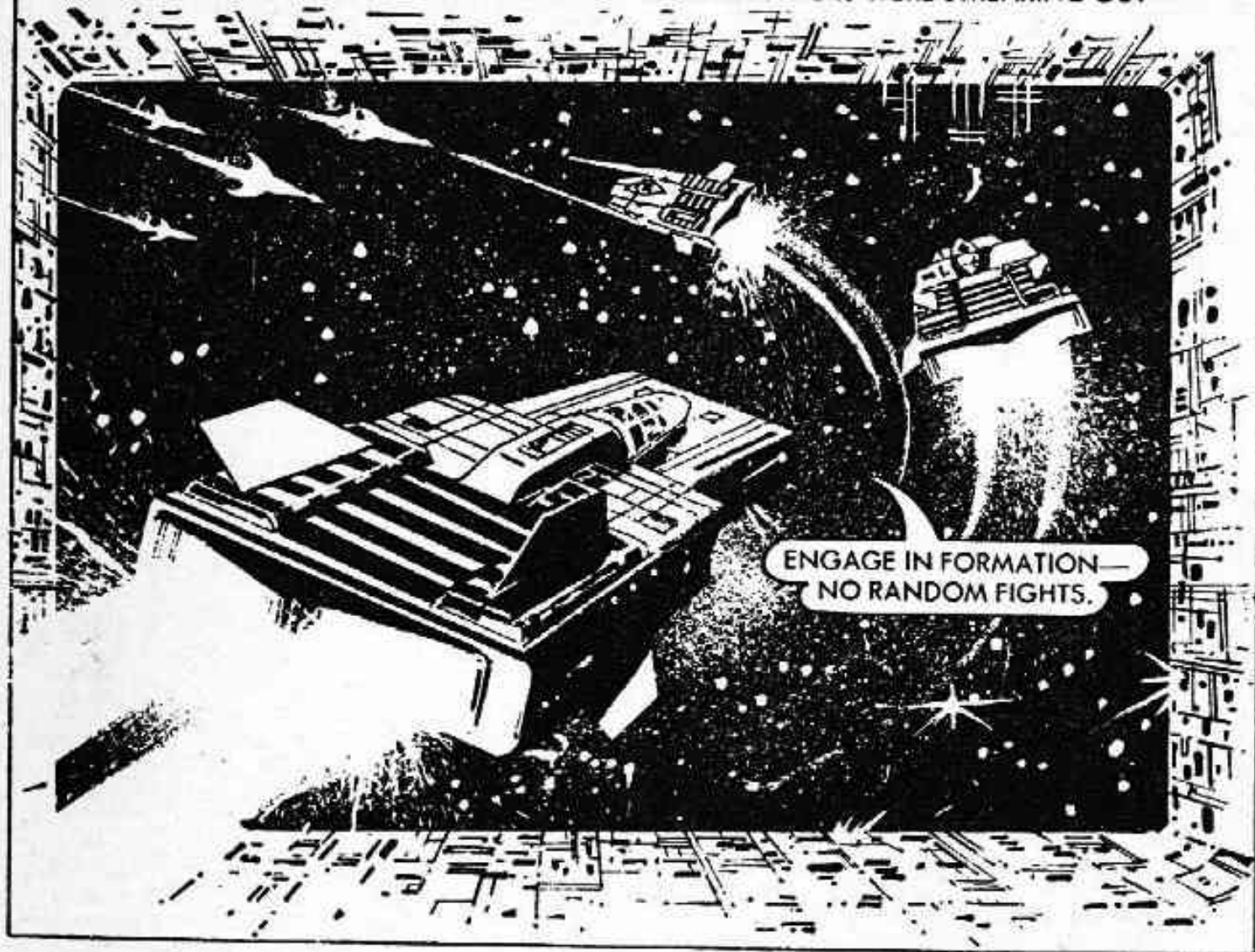
SAFE UNDER A DEFENCE SCREEN ARGO WAS IN NO DANGER—

BRODIE—TAKE OUT A SQUADRON AND ENGAGE THEM!

HEAVY PHASER FIRE WILL DEplete OUR ENERGY BANKS! WE CANNOT ENGAGE MUCH LONGER.



MOMENTS LATER CAPTAIN SCOTT BRODIE AND HIS STARFIGHTERS WERE STREAKING OUT—



ENGAGE IN FORMATION—  
NO RANDOM FIGHTS.



FIRE... FIRE... FIRE...



A RETROFLIP... THIS  
BOY'S GOOD.

A RETROFLIP WAS A TACTIC USED TO CONFUSE AUTOSIGHTING. BY ENGAGING RETROS TO SLOW THE CRAFT, AND FLIPPING THE CRAFT ON ITS SIDE, THE PHASER BEAMS OVERSHOT.





BRODIE SWUNG ONTO THE  
LEADER'S TAIL . . .



BUT EVEN AS HE BEGAN TO  
PRESS THE FIRING BUTTON—



JUPE . . . CAUGHT  
BY A LOOP!

BUT WITH BRODIE AT HIS MERCY, THE PILOT DIDN'T FIRE.



STONE ME! HE  
DIDN'T FIRE.

SCOTT SLOWED TO COME ALONGSIDE THE ALIEN—



NEXT SECOND—





BRODIE TO ARGO! WE'RE COMING IN!  
GRADE "A" ALERT.

THE STARFIGHTERS SWEEPED IN TO THE SAFETY  
OF THE OPERATION DECK—

SIR, ONE OF THOSE PILOTS WAS DICK  
CRAIG! COULD HE HAVE CHANGED SIDES?


POSSIBLE—THOSE PILOTS KNEW  
YOUR EVERY MOVE.





BRODIE'S FLIGHT SCREAMED AWAY—

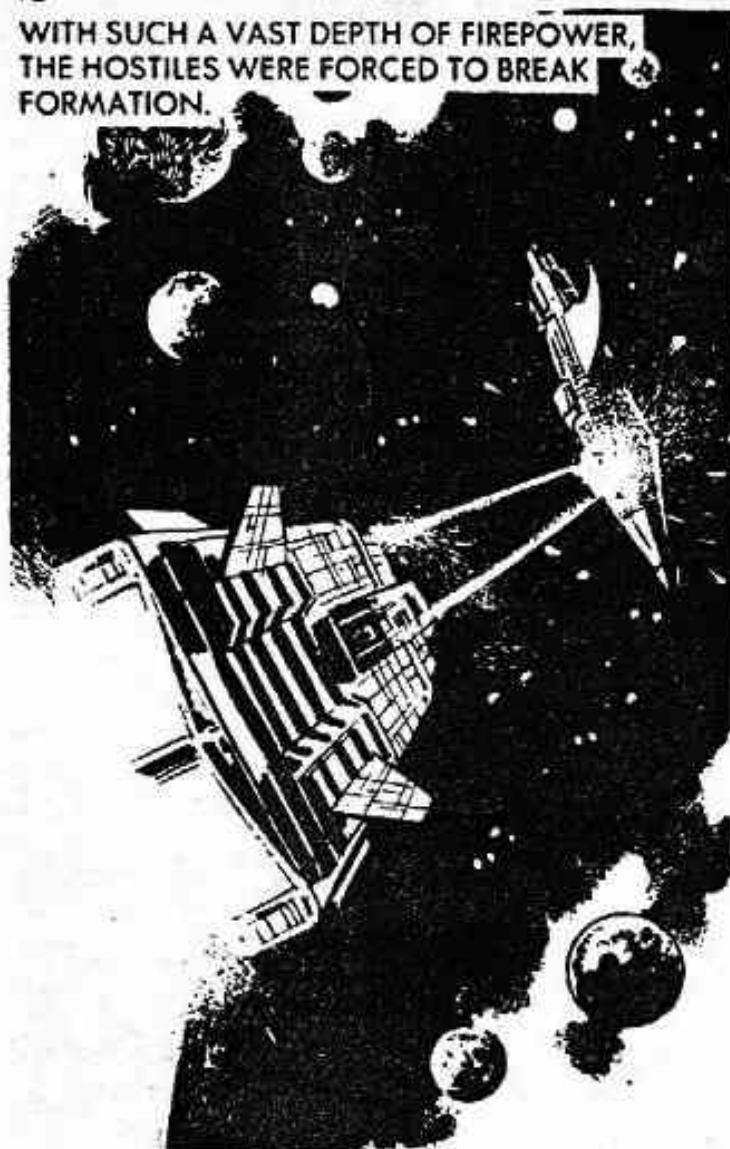
WE'RE ABOUT TO GO OUT OF  
CONTACT, ARGO! NO SIGN OF HOSTILES.



BUT THE MOMENT THE INTENSE TURBULENCE  
OF THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE BLANKED OUT  
MICROWAVE SCANNING—



WITH SUCH A VAST DEPTH OF FIREPOWER,  
THE HOSTILES WERE FORCED TO BREAK  
FORMATION.



GOT HIM! WHY DOESN'T  
HE EJECT!



WHY DIDN'T HE EJECT? HEAD FOR  
THE SURFACE! CHASE 'EM DOWN!



I'VE SEEN FRIENDLIER-LOOKING  
PLACES. WHERE ARE THEY GONNA LAND?



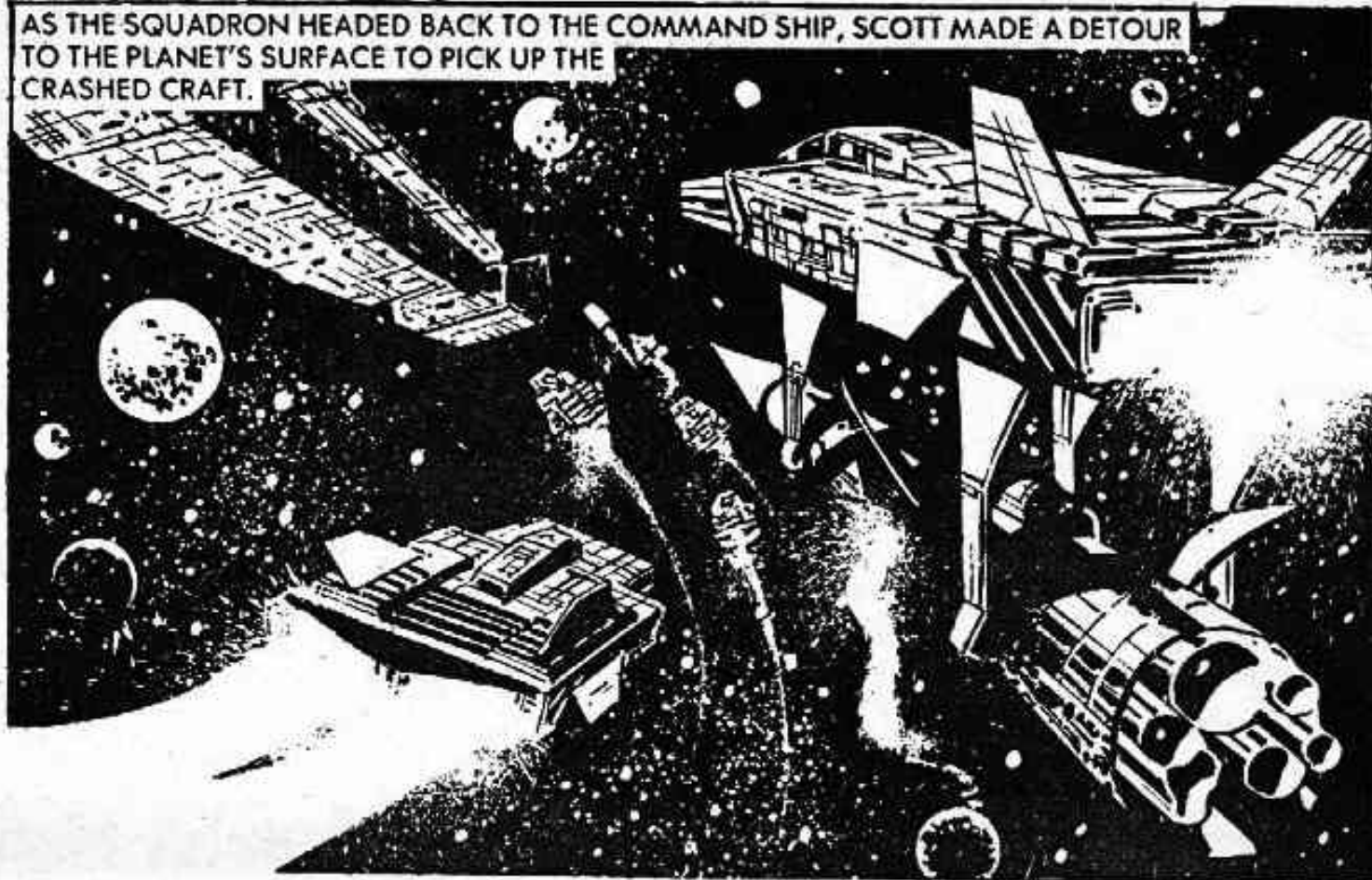
AN ENORMOUS BUNKER YAWNED OPEN IN THE HOSTILE  
PLANET SURFACE—AND THE RAIDERS  
DISAPPEARED INSIDE.

NOW WHAT, SKIPPER?

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD! FIND OUT WHY THIS  
PLANET IS A FIGHTER BASE, AND WHY THEIR PILOTS  
DON'T EJECT FROM CRIPPLED CRAFT, AND WHO THEY  
ARE FIGHTING FOR.



AS THE SQUADRON HEADED BACK TO THE COMMAND SHIP, SCOTT MADE A DETOUR TO THE PLANET'S SURFACE TO PICK UP THE CRASHED CRAFT.

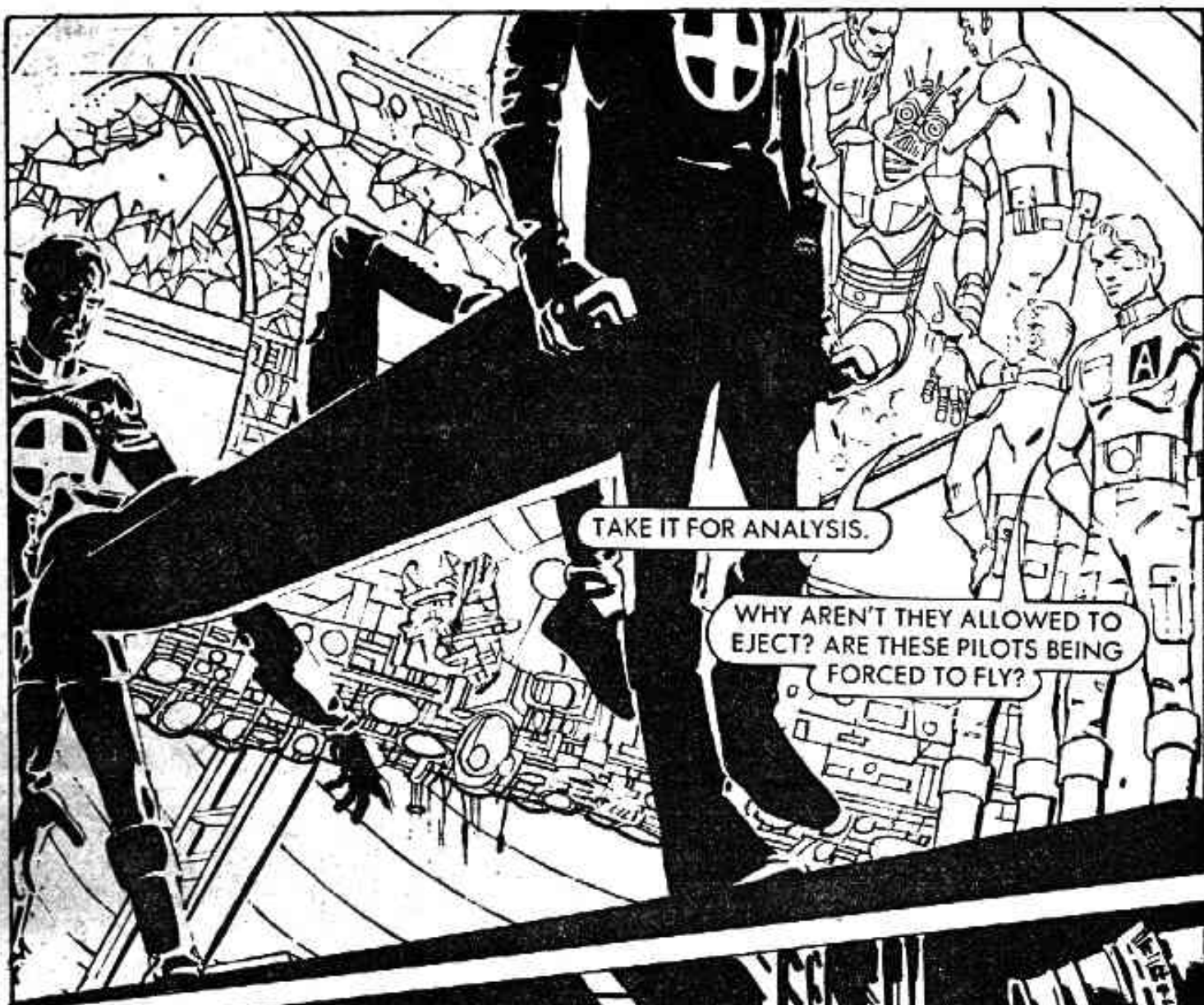


ONCE BACK IN ARGO'S MAINTENANCE BAY—



HE'S DEAD! BUT LOOK AT HIS FEET! THEY'RE SHACKLED TO THE FLOOR!

THERE'S A SHATTERED ROBOT HERE!



TAKE IT FOR ANALYSIS.

WHY AREN'T THEY ALLOWED TO  
EJECT? ARE THESE PILOTS BEING  
FORCED TO FLY?



OBVIOUSLY! BUT WHY,  
AND BY WHOM?

LET ME GO BACK AND LAND NEAR THAT BUNKER,  
SIR! LET ME TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.



SCOTT WAS QUICKLY BEAMED DOWN—





ZEUS! THESE WINDS ARE WICKED! I MUST BE MOVING FORWARD AT ABOUT AN INCH AN HOUR!



SUDDENLY—

WHAT THE...??



THE STRANGE SEMI-DORMANT CREATURE HAD SENSED FOOD — THE CALCIUM CONTAINED IN SCOTT'S BODY.

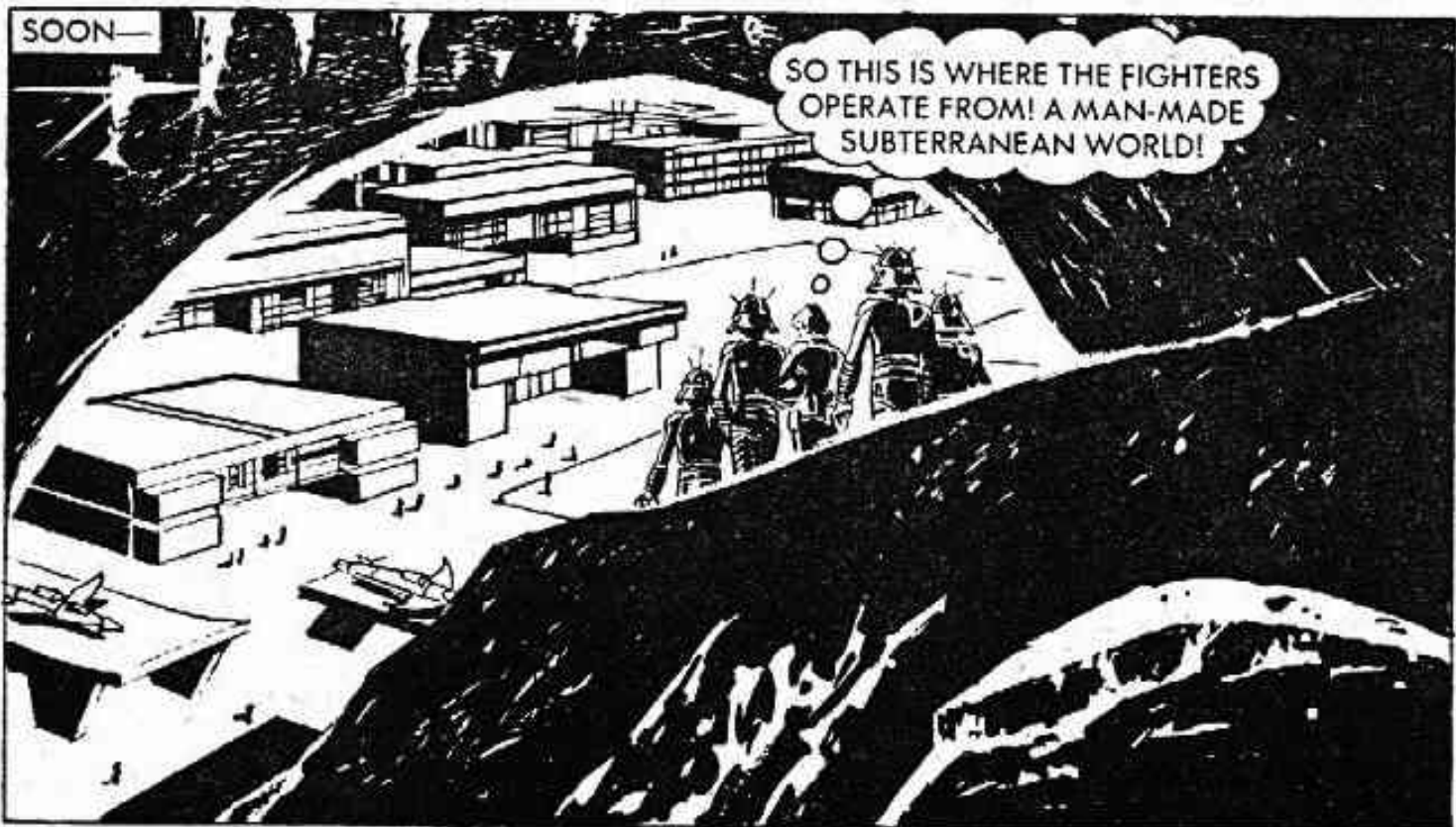
YIIHH! IT'S FAST! AND POWERFUL!



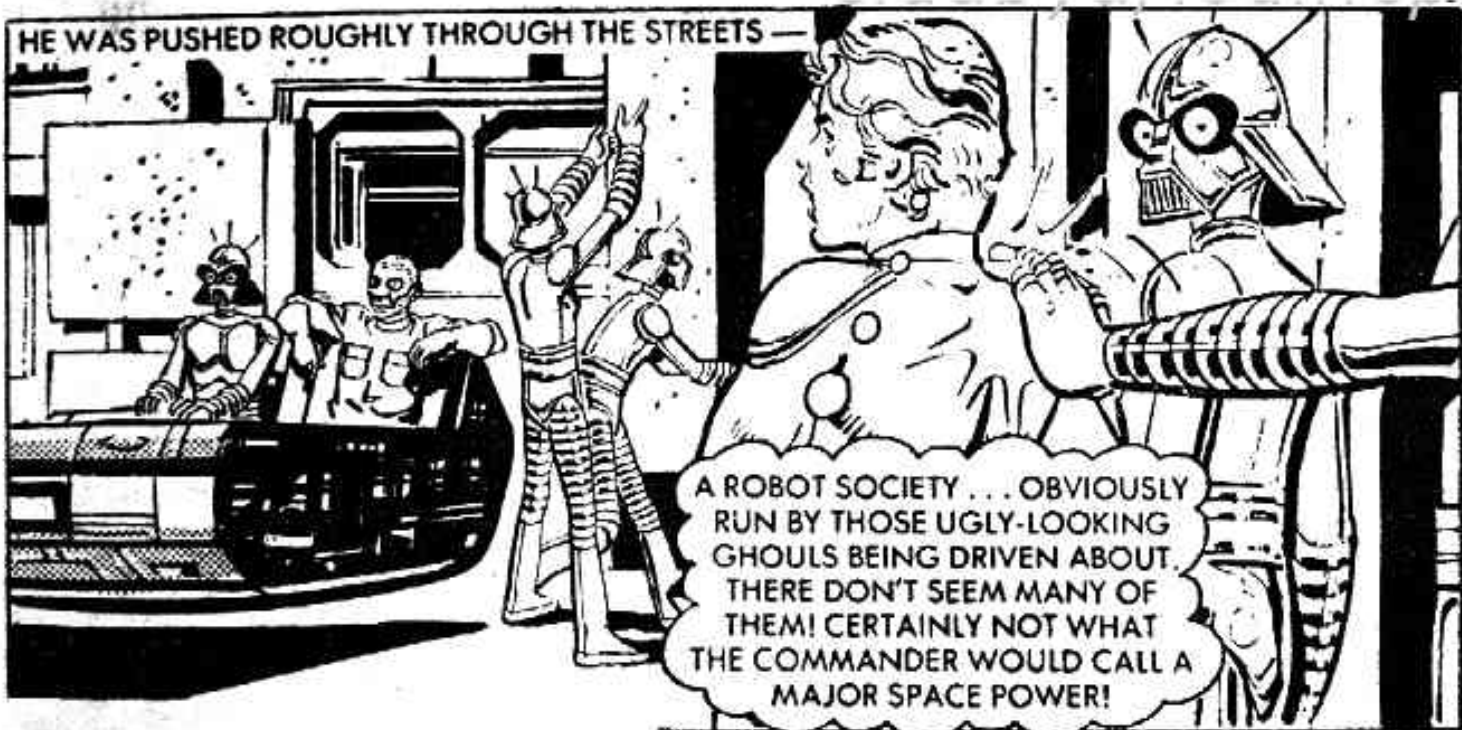
JUST AS THE ODDS SEEMED OVERWHELMING —



DISTRACTED BY THE CARNIVOROUS CREATURES, SCOTT HAD FAILED TO SEE ANOTHER MENACE.



HE WAS PUSHED ROUGHLY THROUGH THE STREETS —



EVENTUALLY THE GROUP ARRIVED IN THE MAIN HALL —



THE VOICE WAS UNMISTAKABLY ALIEN ALTHOUGH TRANSLATED INTO SCOTT'S LANGUAGE.



SCOTT WAS DRAGGED TO ANOTHER CHAMBER.




HE WAS STRAPPED TO A STRANGE DEVICE —




MUCH LATER AS THE MISTS OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS RECEDED —





NOT TOO BAD! HOW LONG  
HAVE I BEEN OUT?

NO IDEA! YOU WERE BROUGHT IN HERE ABOUT  
TWELVE HOURS AGO, BUT HOW LONG SINCE  
YOU WERE CAUGHT I'VE NO IDEA.



AND THIS, I GATHER, IS WHERE YOU'VE  
BEEN KEPT SINCE YOU DISAPPEARED?

YES! WE'RE NOT TRAITORS, AS YOU MUST HAVE  
REALISED. I'LL PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE ABOUT  
WHAT HAPPENED.

APPARENTLY, YEARS AGO, A SPACECRAFT FROM THE PLANET KUIS LANDED SPERIS AND  
SEVERAL HUNDRED OTHERS HERE —

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COURT'S  
SENTENCE, YOU ARE TO BE ABANDONED  
HERE ON THE PLANET EBRO.

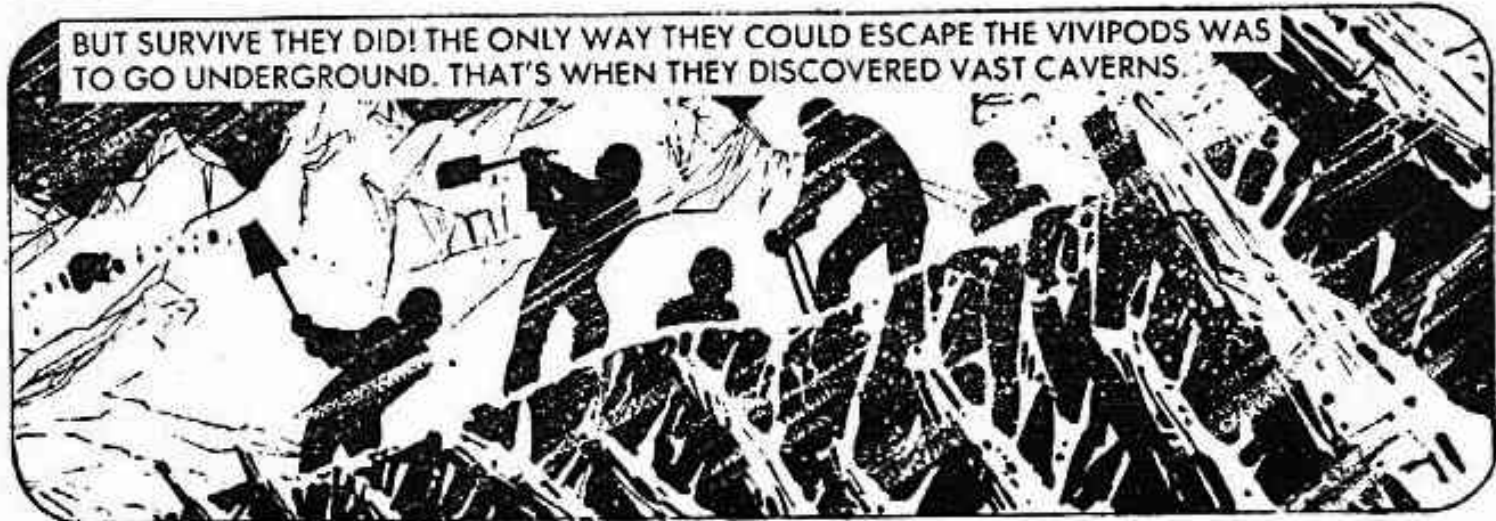



POLITICIANS, GENERALS, SCIENTISTS AND  
ENGINEERS, THEY HAD BEEN FOUND GUILTY  
OF A PLOT TO OVERTHROW THEIR HOME  
PLANET'S GOVERNMENT ...

THEY WEREN'T EXPECTED TO SURVIVE LONG, IN VIEW OF THE INHOSPITABLE CLIMATE AND THE VIVIPODS, THE FLESH-EATING CREATURES —



BUT SURVIVE THEY DID! THE ONLY WAY THEY COULD ESCAPE THE VIVIPODS WAS TO GO UNDERGROUND. THAT'S WHEN THEY DISCOVERED VAST CAVERNS.





JUPITER'S MOONS! LOOK AT THAT  
ZANTHIUM — WATER, AND EDIBLE  
FUNGUS. WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN  
EVERYTHING WE NEED TO SURVIVE  
AND FLOURISH.

IT TOOK MANY YEARS, BUT SPERIS AND HIS FOLLOWERS CREATED AN ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY.



IN DUE COURSE, THEIR SOCIETY REACHED ITS PEAK. THE ONLY WAY IT COULD ADVANCE FURTHER WAS TO ACHIEVE SPACE TRAVEL. THIS THEY COULDN'T DO BECAUSE THE MATERIALS DIDN'T EXIST, SO, THE OBVIOUS ANSWER WAS TO ACQUIRE IT!

WE PICKED UP A RADIO PROBE WHILE WE WERE OUT ON PATROL... AND WENT TO INVESTIGATE.







WE'VE BEEN KEPT IN COMBAT READINESS FOR TWO YEARS, JUST WAITING FOR A STARSHIP TO STRAY NEAR.



THAT'S RIGHT! WE TRIED TO BREAK OFF, BUT THESE NERVE PAIN THINGS WOULDN'T LET US.

SPERIS REASONED THAT  
YOU WOULD INVESTIGATE.

SCOTT AND DICK WERE  
ORDERED TO BE PRESENT  
AT THE INTERROGATION —

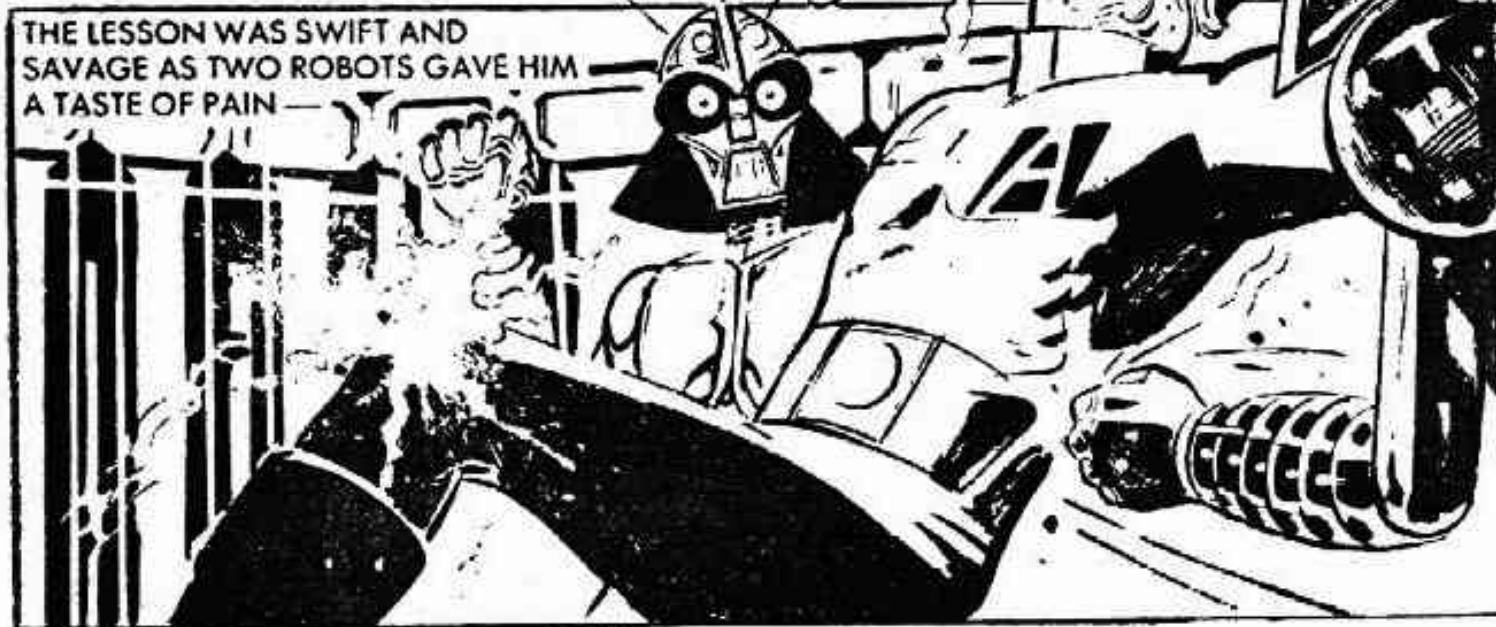
YOU ARE TO RETURN TO YOUR  
COMAND-SHIP AND LURE IT HERE!

IT'S GONE! I WAS GIVEN ONLY TWENTY-  
FOUR HOURS FOR MY MISSION! AFTER  
THAT, THE ARGO LEFT!

NOBODY DEFIES ME —  
TEACH HIM RESPECT!



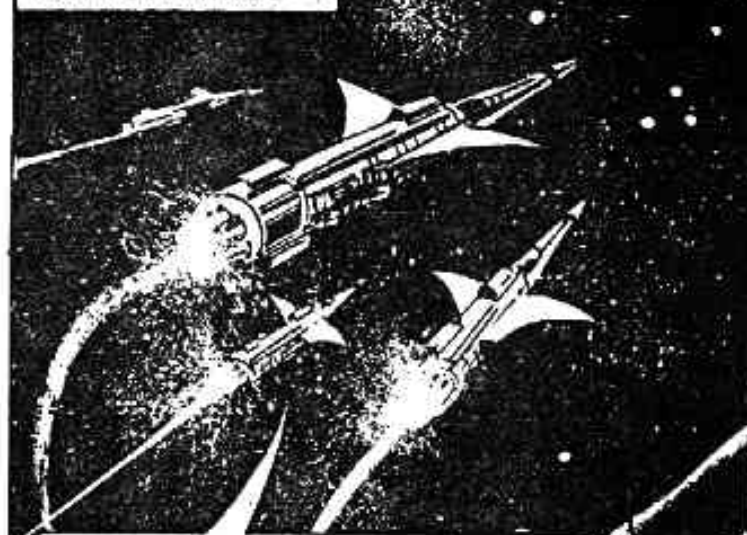
THE LESSON WAS SWIFT AND  
SAVAGE AS TWO ROBOTS GAVE HIM  
A TASTE OF PAIN —



FROM NOW ON, YOU WILL PATROL WITH THE SQUADRON AND WATCH FOR THE APPROACH OF ANY STARSHIP!



BEFORE LONG, SCOTT WAS FORCED TO FLY HIS FIRST PATROL —



ISN'T THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO, DICK? SURELY THERE'S SOME WAY OF UNLOADING THESE ROBOTS!

NOTHING DOING! WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING IN THE PAST!



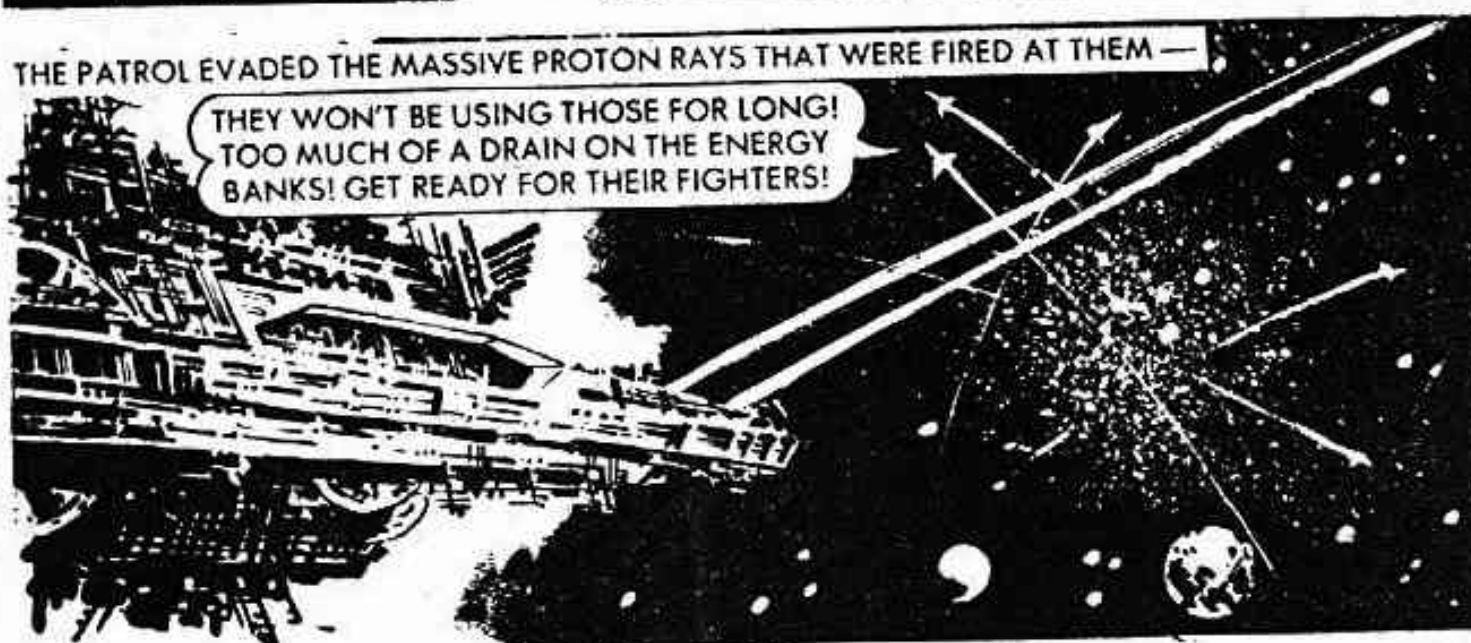
THEY'RE PROGRAMMED TO RECOGNISE THE SLIGHTEST MUTINOUS INTENTION!

AAAHH! I — I JUST FOUND OUT!

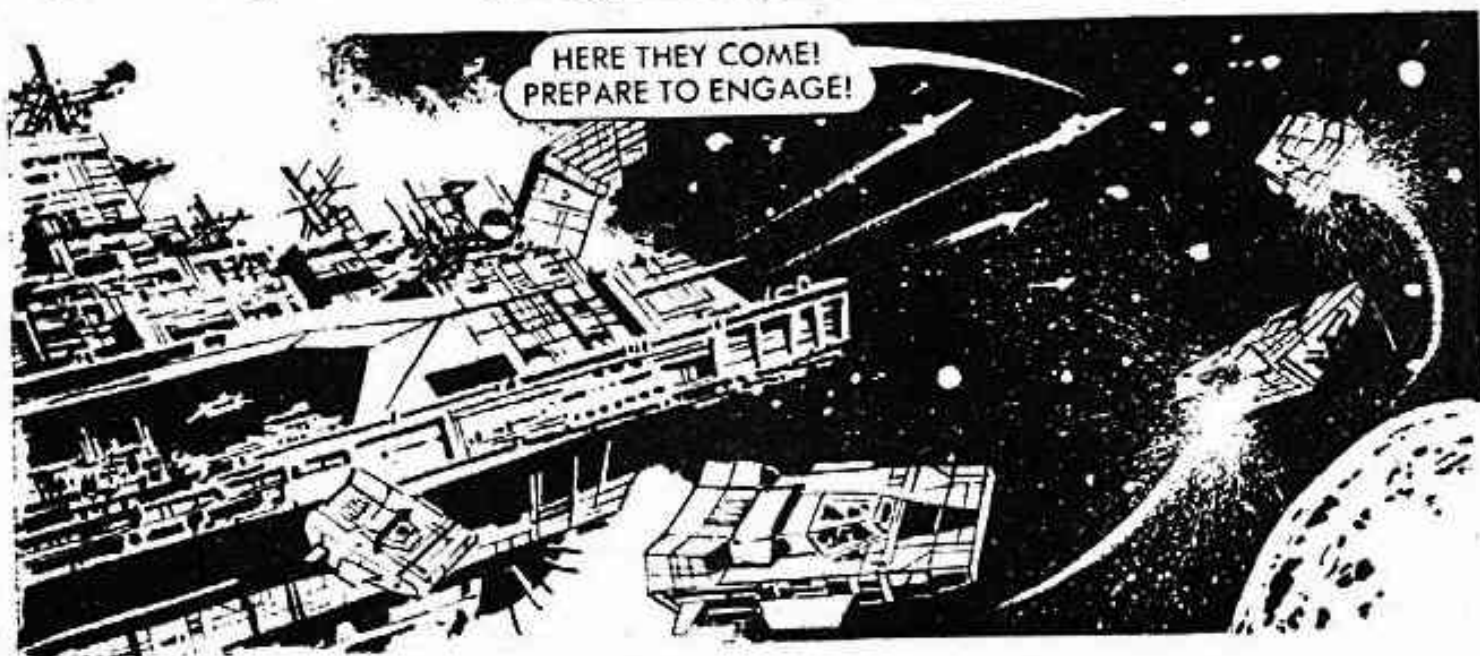
MANY UNTIS LATER, AFTER NUMEROUS FRUITLESS PATROLS —



THE PATROL EVADED THE MASSIVE PROTON RAYS THAT WERE FIRED AT THEM —



HERE THEY COME!  
PREPARE TO ENGAGE!



AS THE FIGHTERS SURGED FORWARD —



YOU STAY BACK, SCOTT!  
YOUR CRAFT HASN'T  
BEEN FITTED OUT YET!

MOMENTS LATER —



ZEUS! FLYING ROBOTS! EACH  
HOMING IN ON AN ENEMY CRAFT!

POWERFUL BEAMS SEARED THROUGH  
COCKPIT CANOPIES —





SOON AFTERWARDS, THE  
STARSHIP COMMANDER  
SIGNALLLED HIS WISH TO  
SURRENDER . . . AND  
RECEIVED ORDERS TO DESCEND  
SLOWLY TO THE PLANET'S  
SURFACE.



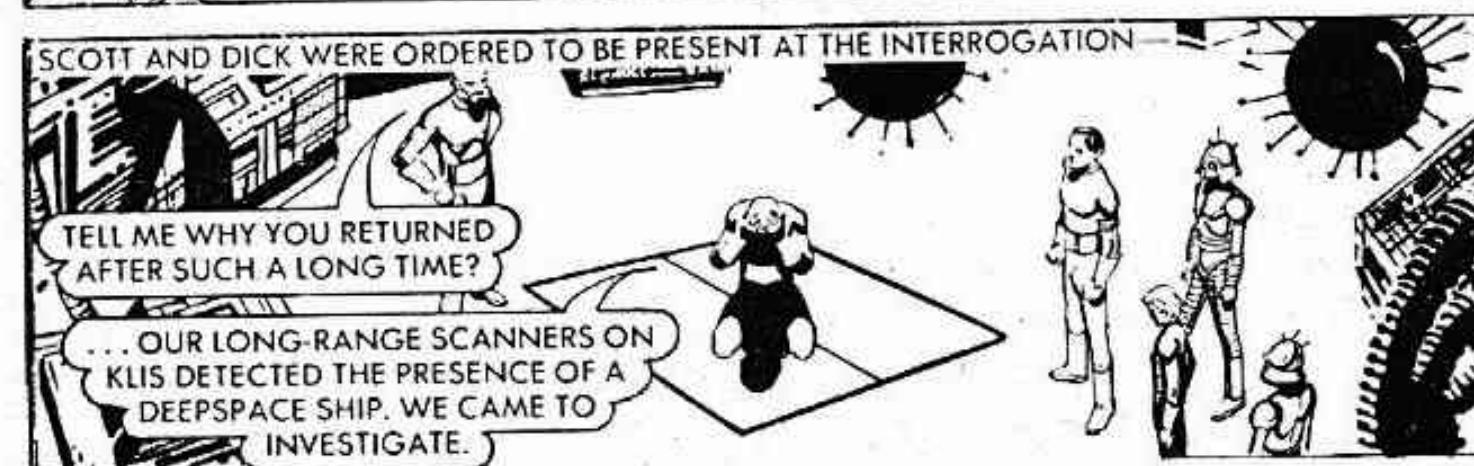
THE CRAFT WAS FROM THE HOME PLANET OF SPERIS —



THE STARSHIP COMMANDER STARED AT HIM WITH CONTEMPT —



SCOTT AND DICK WERE ORDERED TO BE PRESENT AT THE INTERROGATION —



IT IS GONE! BUT YOURS IS NOW  
HERE. I AM MOST GRATEFUL.



SPERIS PULLED A LEVER, AND A SECTION OF THE  
FLOOR OPENED —

WE SURVIVED THE VIVIPODS WHEN WE  
FIRST CAME HERE! SEE IF YOU CAN!



AND NOW . . . YOU TWO WILL HELP SUPERVISE  
THE REPAIR OF THE STARSHIP! WITH IT I PLAN  
TO ANNIHILATE KLIS! AND THEN I SHALL WAGE  
WAR ON YOUR OWN PLANET. I MEAN TO BE  
MASTER OF THE GALAXY!



UNITS LATER —

THE WORK IS FINISHED! THE  
STARSHIP IS OPERATIONAL ONCE MORE!

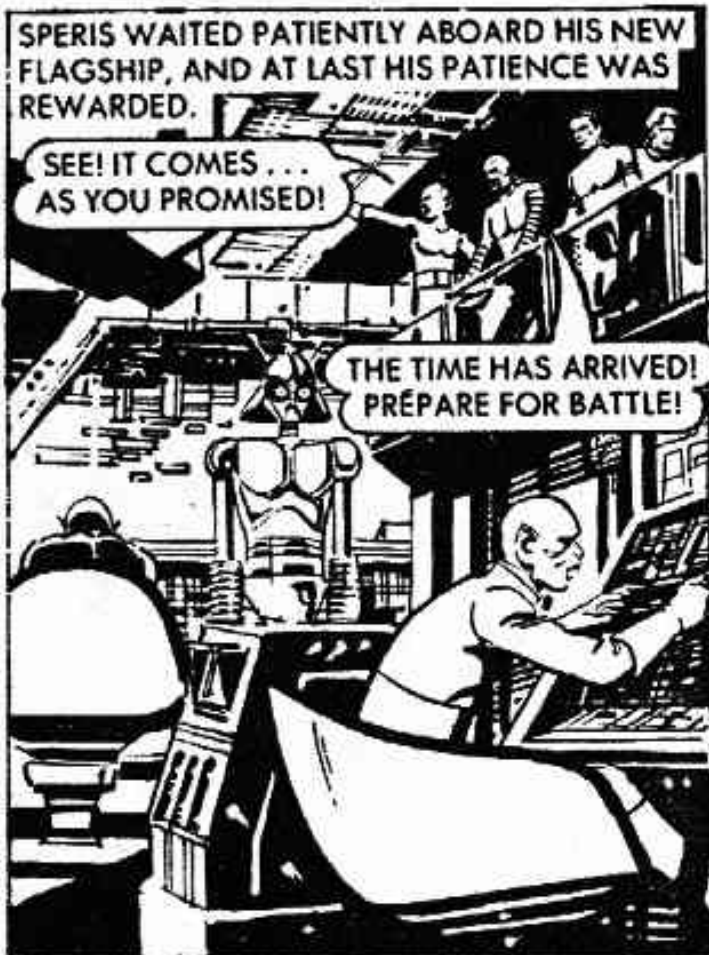
EXCELLENT! AND SOON, I SUSPECT, IT WILL HAVE  
ITS FIRST ENGAGEMENT! THE EARTH SHIP  
SHOULD BE RETURNING.



SPERIS WAITED PATIENTLY ABOARD HIS NEW  
FLAGSHIP, AND AT LAST HIS PATIENCE WAS  
REWARDED.

SEE! IT COMES . . .  
AS YOU PROMISED!

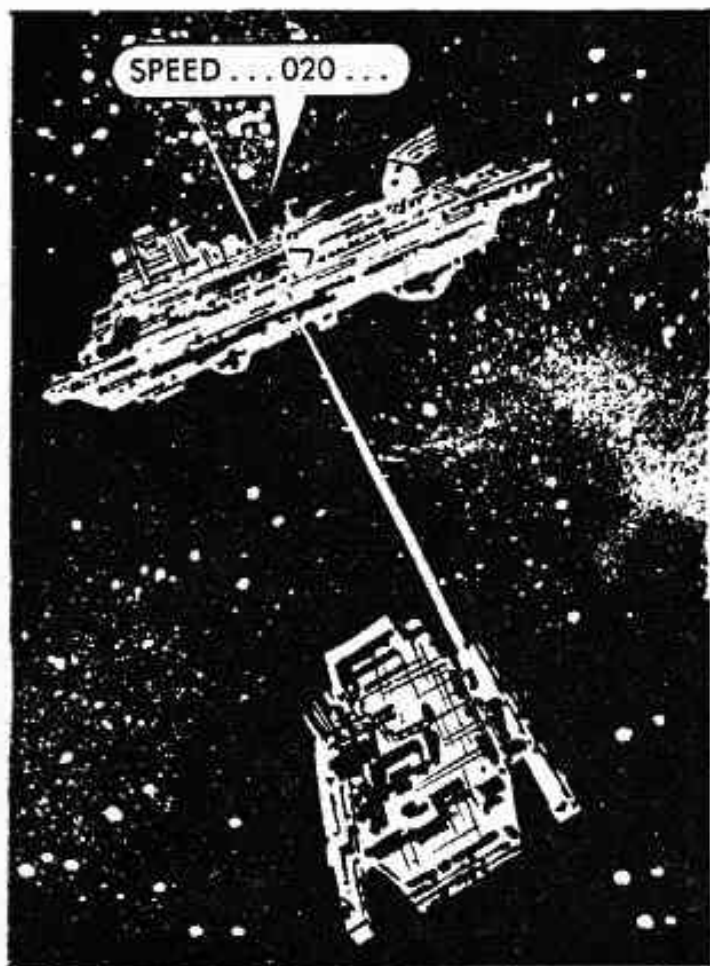
THE TIME HAS ARRIVED!  
PRÉPARE FOR BATTLE!



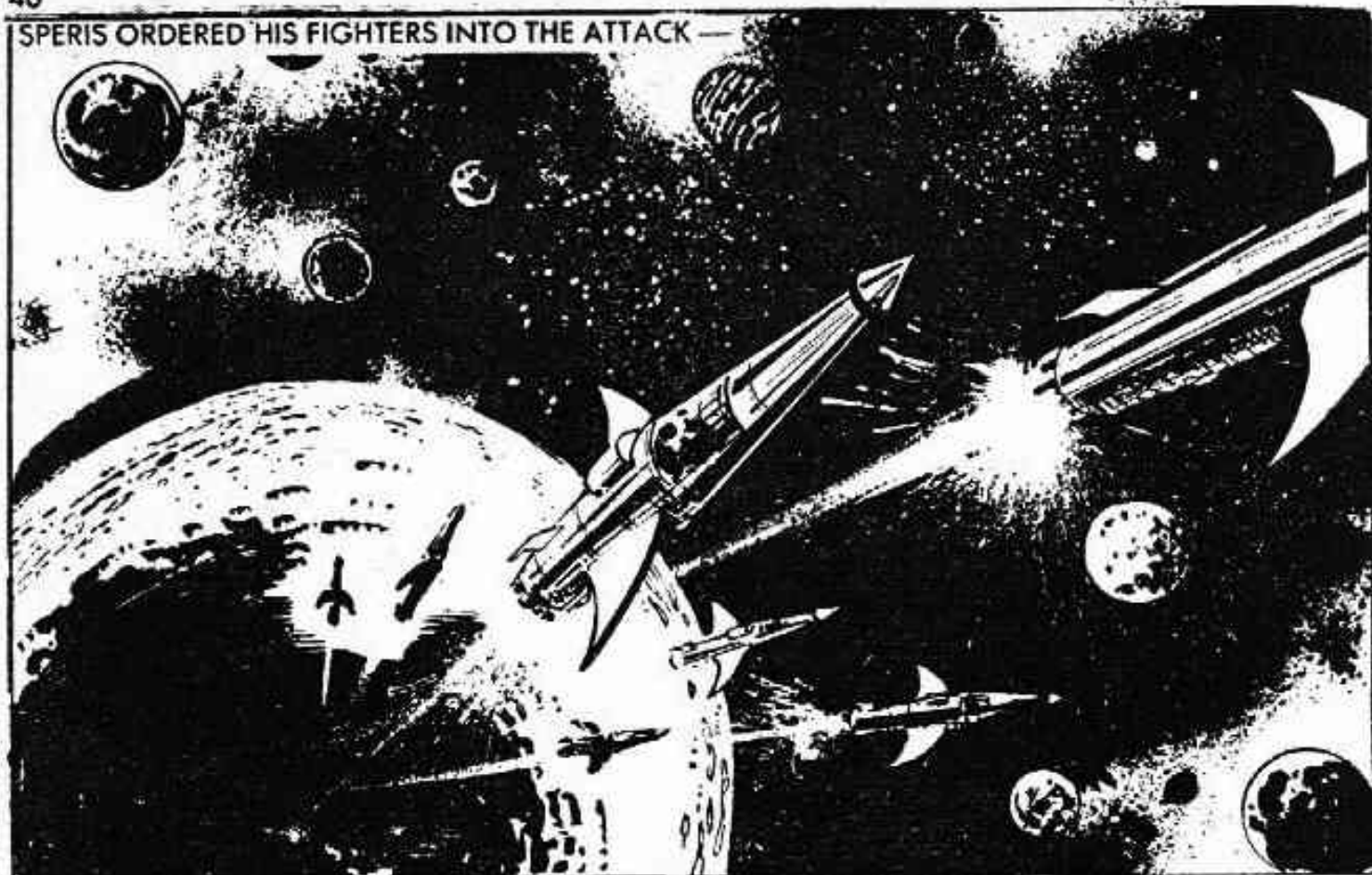
ABOARD THE ARGO, COMMANDER SINCLAIR  
STUDIED THE APPROACHING CRAFT WITH COOL  
PROFESSIONAL CALM AND MILITARY CAUTION.

RAISE THE DEFLECTOR SHIELD!  
PRÉPARE FOR BATTLE.





SPERIS ORDERED HIS FIGHTERS INTO THE ATTACK —



BUT —

FULL SPEED REVERSE!



WHY DOESN'T HE STAY  
AND FIGHT?

WHY SHOULD HE? ALL HE HAS TO  
DO IS RETREAT FAR ENOUGH TO  
LEAVE YOUR FIGHTERS STRANDED  
WHEN THEIR FUEL RUNS OUT! AND  
YOU SEEM UNABLE TO HIT HIS  
CRAFT.



IN FRUSTRATION, SPERIS  
ORDERED THE RECALL —

SO IT IS STALEMATE? BUT NEVER  
FEAR! MY HAND IS NOT PLAYED  
YET. YOU WILL APPROACH THE SHIP  
AND PARLEY WITH YOUR  
COMMANDER.

ABOUT WHAT? HE'D  
NEVER SURRENDER.



DO EXACTLY AS YOU ARE TOLD. DO  
NOT QUESTION MY DECISIONS.  
NOW GO! TAKE THE CRAIG PERSON  
WITH YOU.

BEFORE LONG, THE TWO CRAFT WERE APPROACHING THE ARGO —



WHAT DOES SPERIS HOPE TO GAIN BY THIS?  
ALL HE'S TOLD ME TO DO IS GIVE SINCLAIR  
THE FREQUENCY ON WHICH THEY CAN TALK!

## ON THE ARGO —



## THE TWO CRAFT DOCKED —





SCOTT GAVE THE FREQUENCY ON WHICH  
TO CONTACT SPERIS —

AT LAST! WHEN YOU LANDED ON  
EBRO AND WERE CAPTURED, I  
ORDERED YOU TO BE TAKEN TO THE  
"MANIPULATOR", DID I NOT?

YES... BUT YOU NEVER TOLD  
ME WHAT THE "MANIPULATOR" WAS.





SCOTT GRABBED A HELMET AND RAN —

STOP THE TERRAN!

THE MOLECULAR TRANSPORTER ACTIVATED INSTANTLY AND RE-ASSEMBLED SCOTT IN SPACE.

MADE IT!



BUT SUDDENLY —

DICK — THE IDIOT!  
HE'S COMING AFTER ME!



USING EXCESS OXYGEN, SCOTT  
MANOEUVRED HIMSELF AWAY —

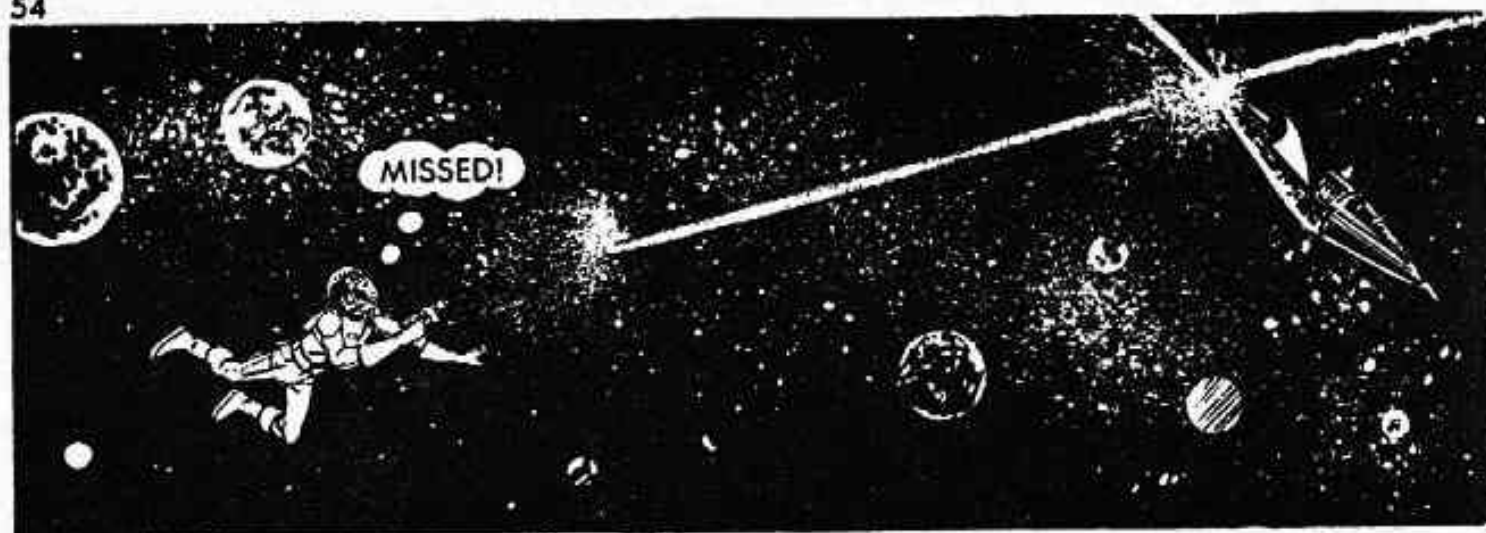


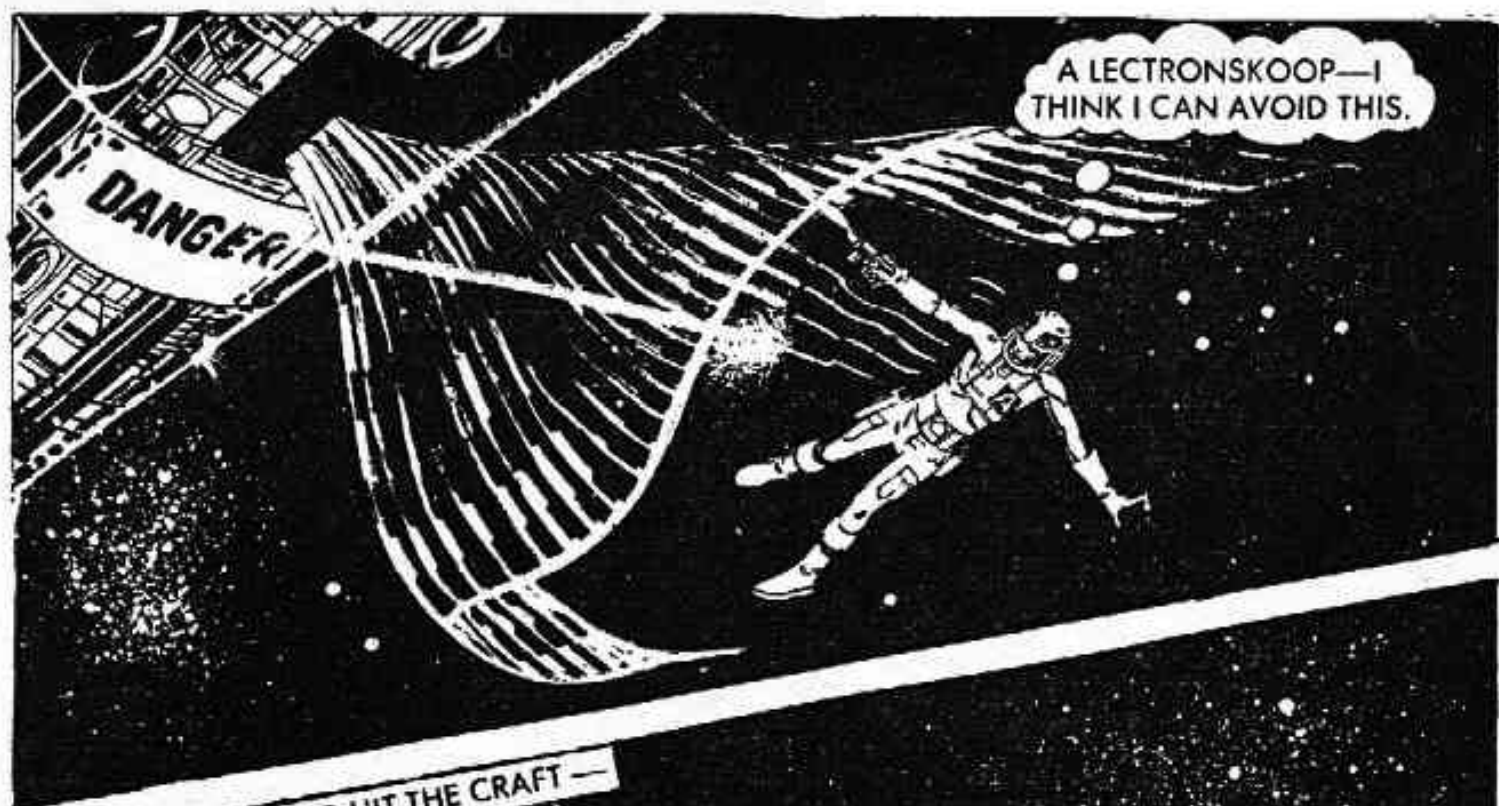
THE ROBOTS MUST HAVE FORCED  
HIM! HE'S GOING TO TRY AND TAKE  
ME BACK TO THE ARGO TO EXPLODE  
THE BOMB!

I'M NOT GOING BACK!

SCOTT SQUEEZED OFF A BLAST FROM HIS PHASER, BUT IN FREE SPACE HE WASN'T A STABLE FIRING PLATFORM.

YOU'RE NOT TAKING ME BACK  
ABOARD TO BLOW UP MY OWN SHIP!





SCOTT MANAGED TO HIT THE CRAFT —





THE TWO BEGAN A STRUGGLE IN SPACE —



SORRY, SCOTT — BUT LACK OF AIR  
WILL DO THE JOB.

DICK JETTED SLOWLY BACK TO THE ARGO.



WHEN HE CAME ROUND SCOTT FOUND HIMSELF BACK ABOARD THE ARGO.

WHY DIDN'T YOU KILL ME, DICK? WHY  
DIDN'T YOU BLOW ME TO PIECES  
WITH THAT SHOT?

COULDN'T HAVE STOOD THE  
MESS! NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY...

NOT LONG AFTERWARDS —

SCOTT HAS BEEN RECAPTURED,  
UNFORTUNATELY! IT SEEMS WE MUST  
AGREE TO YOUR DEMANDS. WE WILL  
COME ACROSS NOW TO NEGOTIATE  
OUR SURRENDER.

I LOOK FORWARD TO  
IT WITH PLEASURE!

ONE OF ARGO'S SHUTTLES TOOK THEM ACROSS —

BOW TO THE RULER OF EBRO,  
AND ULTIMATELY THE UNIVERSE!

I WILL BOW TO NO MAN —  
ESPECIALLY A BRUTE SUCH AS YOU.





BUT AS SPERIS REACHED FOR THE  
ACTIVATOR — X



YOU!! YOU SHOULD  
BE ON THE ARGO!!

NO — I'M HERE!





DEAL WITH THEM! DEAL  
WITH THEM, I SAY!!

I'LL FOLLOW YOU EVERYWHERE. YOU'LL  
NEVER KNOW HOW CLOSE I AM SO YOU  
WON'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT TO RISK  
DETONATING ME.

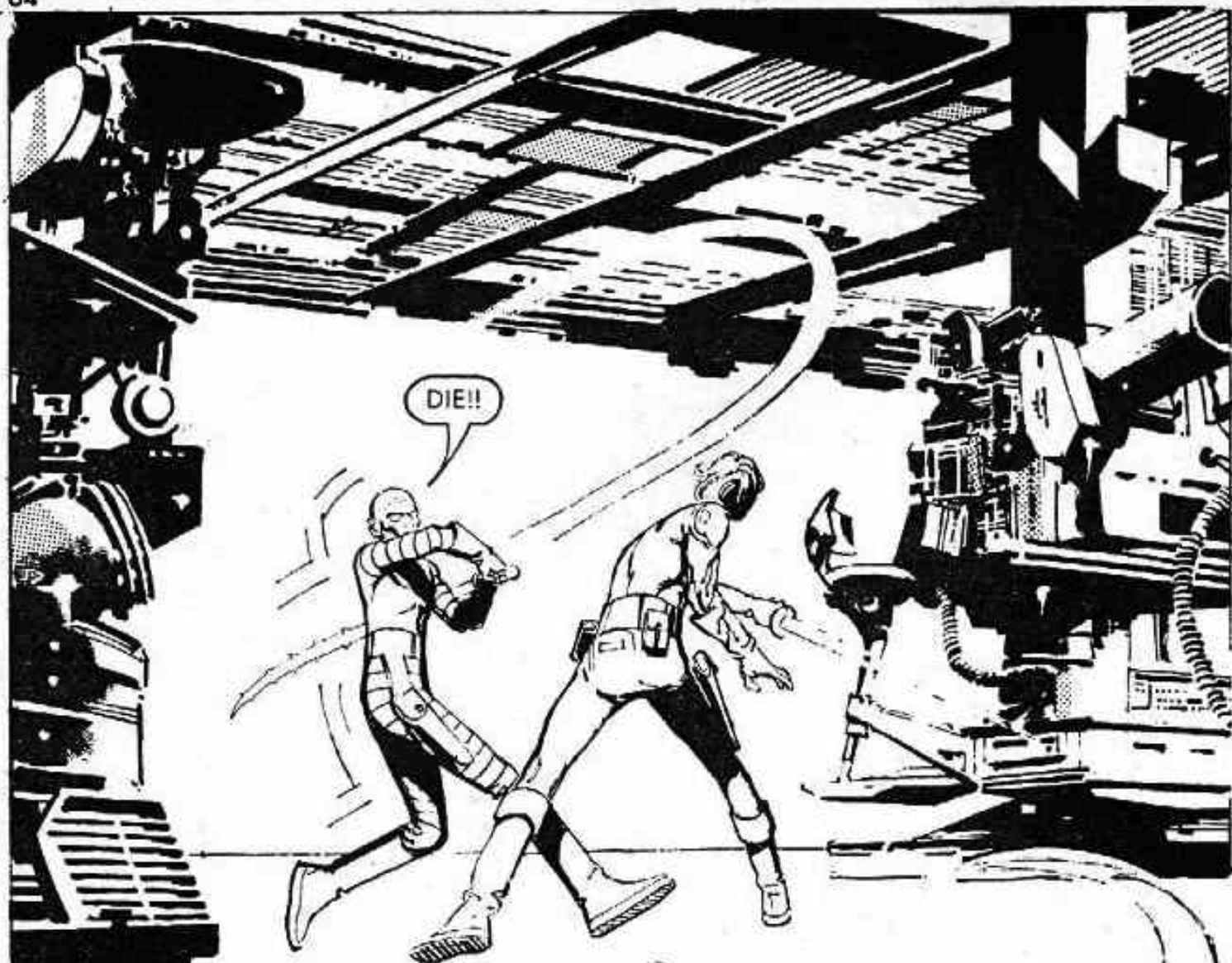
FROM A WEAPONS POUCH, SPERIS PRODUCED A LASER SWORD —

I SHALL KILL YOU!

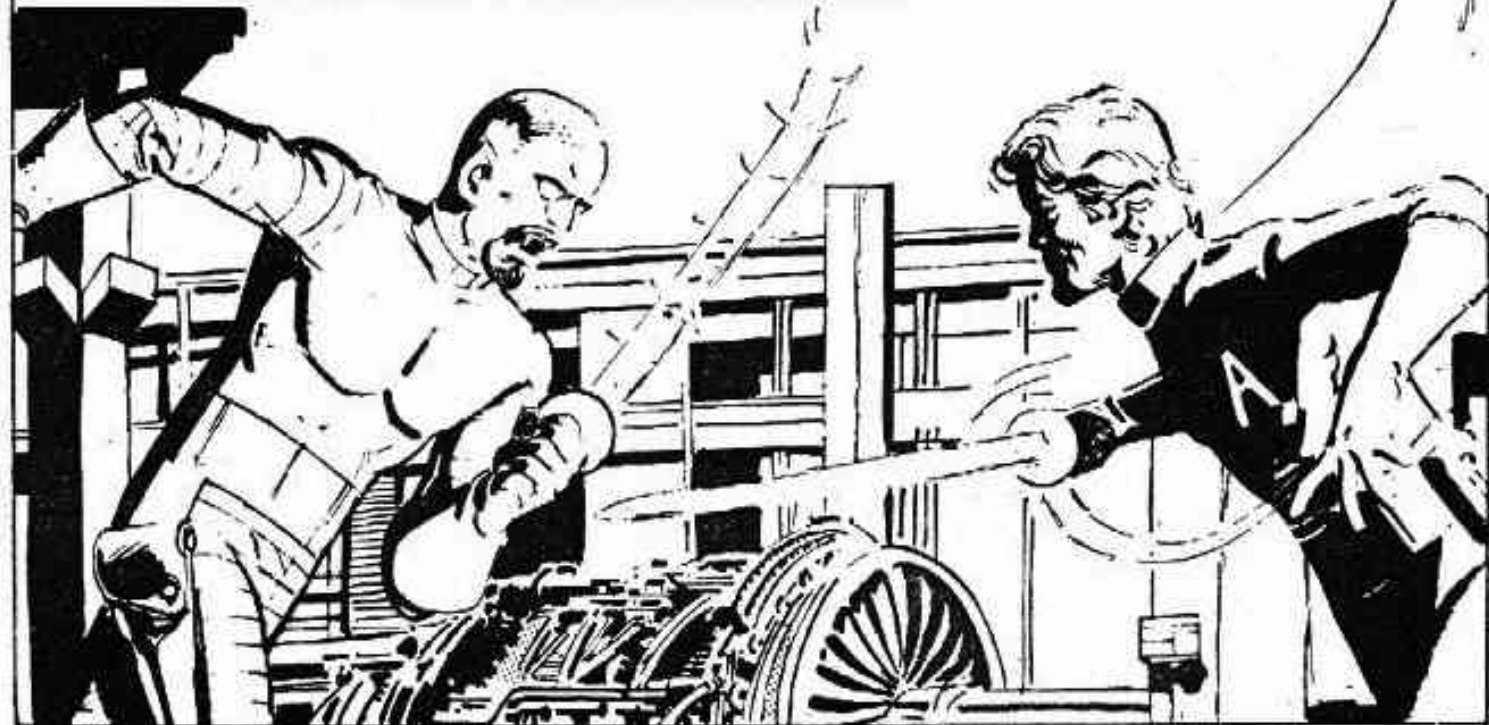


TAKE THIS, SCOTT.

ALTHOUGH WOUNDED, SCOTT  
PREPARED FOR A FIGHT TO THE  
DEATH —



BUT SCOTT FOOLED SPERIS WITH A QUICK HAND CHANGE.





THANK JUPE THAT'S OVER!  
EXPLAIN AGAIN ABOUT THE ROBOTS.

WHEN YOU BEAMED OUT, THE ROBOTS STOPPED  
ALL THE TIME THE BEAM WAS ON. DICK  
IMMEDIATELY REALISED THIS, SHOUTED TO  
ME, AND WENT AFTER YOU. THE BEAMER USES  
TIME/SPACE DISTORTION TO BEAM MOLECULES  
SHORT DISTANCES — THIS DISTORTION  
PREVENTED THE ROBOTS GETTING THEIR  
MICROWAVE INSTRUCTIONS.

AND THE PORTABLE BEAMERS  
WERE ENOUGH TO BRING THE  
ARMY TO A STANDSTILL.



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**52-53**

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Soyuz 11 was crewed by three cosmonauts, commander Lieutenant Colonel Georgi Dobravoisky, below, Viktor Patsayev and Vladislav Volkov who had already been in space. Their mission, launched on June 6, 1971 ended in a tragedy. After a record-breaking 23 days, 18 hr., 22 min. their craft suffered a pressurisation failure on re-entry and all three died.